

# Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Updated April 15, 2010

- **Given the change in YOBG legislation, what are the data collection and reporting requirements?**

By May 1st of each year (beginning in 2010), counties must submit a Juvenile Justice Development Plan (JJDP) to CSA that outlines their anticipated programs and expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year. By October 1st of each year (also beginning in 2010), counties must submit a report to CSA that includes actual expenditures for the previous fiscal year as well as program performance outcomes for that year. The 2011-12 JJDP form is currently available on the CSA website. The outcome reporting templates will be sent to counties in July 2011 and the expenditure reporting form will follow in early August.

- **Will the Fiscal Year 2011-12 allocation amount be the same as the allocation amount for Fiscal Year 2010-11?**

The Department of Finance calculates the allocation using the following formula: 50% based upon the county's population of minors from 10 to 17 years of age, and 50% based upon the county's juvenile felony court dispositions according to the most recent data compiled by the Department of Justice. If neither of these numbers has changed very much you can assume your allocation will remain about the same.

- **In completing the JJDP/Funding Application, should the total amount shown in the budget detail pages (Section III) equal the allocation amount?**

No not necessarily. The budget detail pages should equal the amount of funds a county actually intends to spend, not the amount they were allocated.

- **While typing responses in the text boxes of Section III of the JJDP/Funding Application, it appears we are limited in how much we can type. Is that intentional?**

Yes. The narrative responses for Section III of the JJDP/Funding Application are all limited to encourage concise answers. These responses will be posted on CSA's public website.

- **The budget detail pages of the JJDP/Funding Application ask for dollar amounts for "JJCPA funds" and "Other funds." Are these categories supposed to reflect the amount of funds from these respective categories that support our YOBG programs?**

Yes. The instructions at the top of page 2 of the JJDP application describe the budget detail portion of the application as being designed to capture all of the funds that your county uses to support your YOBG-funded programs/services. Please remember that

you should NOT include programs/services that are not in some way supported by YOBG funds.

- **If a county does not spend all of its YOBG funds by the end of the fiscal year in which they were awarded, will these funds revert back to the State?**

No. Pursuant to the Welfare & Institutions Code, and an opinion from the California Department of Finance, there is no requirement that the Youthful Offender Block Grant funds be reverted back to the State if they are not expended by a date certain within any fiscal year. Therefore, failure by a county to utilize the funds within a particular fiscal year will not result in funds reverting back to the state. However, YOBG funds must be spent by counties only for the purposes specified in WIC Section 1950 et seq., consistent with the legislative intent of the youthful offender realignment.

- **What are eligible expenditures for Youthful Offender Block Grant funds?**

The language in Welfare & Institutions Code Section 1951 requires counties to spend YOBG funds to "enhance capacity of county probation, mental health, drug and alcohol, and other county departments to provide appropriate rehabilitative and supervision services to youthful offenders subject to [the Act]." The YOBG statute was designed to give counties tremendous flexibility in determining how best to support programs, placements, services and strategies. CSA does not have a role in directing local expenditures, or program development, under the YOBG program. It is important for counties to ensure their expenditures are consistent with the above code section.

- **Can YOBG funds be used to cover the cost of a ward committed to a juvenile hall Commitment Program if that Ward is at risk of commitment to DJJ? If so, would it necessitate that the minor actually have a sustained 707(b) offense? Or could this be done on any minor ordered into our Commitment Program if we can articulate that she or he is at risk of DJJ?**

The YOBG program was established specifically to provide funding for counties to serve non-707 (b) offenders. The statute is very broad, giving counties tremendous latitude in determining how to design their programs and services for YOBG youth. The general guideline is that counties use YOBG funds to enhance the capacity of county probation to treat youthful offenders who come under the provisions of the YOBG law. See Welfare and Institutions Code 1960 for more information.

- **If staff who work under the YOBG grant work overtime that is grant related, can this be claimed under YOBG?**

Any staff costs incurred to conduct your YOBG program can be paid for with YOBG funds, including overtime.

- **Are we allowed to use outside vendors to assist in analyzing data/statistical information which will be used to provide feedback about the effectiveness of our program? Are we allowed to use an outside vendor to provide drug/alcohol counseling services?**

Both uses are potentially acceptable. Keep in mind the overall purpose of YOBG funds, is to enhance county capacity to provide appropriate supervision and rehabilitative services to youthful offenders coming under YOBG (see Welfare and Institutions Code 1951). All expenses, including those for outside vendors, should be consistent with this purpose.

➤ **Are there restrictions on the amounts or percentages of YOBG funds a county can spend on administrative costs or other line item expenditures?**

No. There are no guidelines for percentages of block grant funding used for administrative costs or other budgeted items. So long as the expenditures are used for the purposes intended by the legislature (see WIC 1950 et seq.) and in keeping with the intent of the youthful offender realignment, counties may make their own decisions with regard to how the money is utilized.

➤ **Are counties required to submit modified Juvenile Justice Development Plans to the Corrections Standards Authority?**

It depends. Consistent with CSA's administration of other grant programs a modified Plan is required if the county wants to (1) make a significant modification to the programmatic approach presented in its original Plan, or (2) make a change in budget line items that equals 10 percent or more of the total block grant amount. For minor changes that do not fall under (1) or (2) above, a letter to the Corrections Standards Authority explaining the nature and necessity of the change is all that is required.

➤ **Who developed the annual application and reporting forms counties are required to complete?**

In September 2009 the CSA Board took action to create an Executive Steering Committee (ESC) comprised of representative stakeholders throughout the State to help CSA guide the development of performance measures (see the CSA website for a list of the committee members). Over the ensuing six months the committee met several times to develop the annual application and reporting forms. The content of the final documents was approved by the CSA Board on March 11, 2010.

➤ **Can we submit a dual-application for both JJCPA and YOBG?**

No. Although the most recent YOBG legislation authorized CSA to consider a dual-application format, the YOBG Executive Steering Committee recommended to the CSA Board that the applications remain separate.

➤ **Our county wants to fund programs that are not funded by Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) grant funds, making it difficult to show coordination between JJCPA and YOBG funds for certain projects. Can YOBG funds be used on programs/services if JJCPA and YOBG funds are not coordinated?**

Yes. As outlined in law, the purpose of the Youthful Offender Block Grant is to enhance the capacity of local communities to implement an effective continuum of response to juvenile crime and delinquency. Allocations from the Youthful Offender Block Grant

Fund must be used to enhance the capacity of county probation, mental health, drug and alcohol, and other county departments to provide appropriate rehabilitative and supervision services to youthful offenders subject to Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 731.1, 733, 1766, and 1767.35. Therefore, if JJCPA funds are not used for the strategies described above, counties are allowed to expended YOBG funds for those enhancements described above. Counties are not constrained by a requirement that they link funds.

- **Due to VLF funds being lower than projected there is a possibility that we may need to eliminate a program under JJCPA in the middle of this fiscal year. Can YOBG funds be used to backfill JJCPA cuts?**

There is nothing in the YOBG statute that precludes you from using some of these funds to pay for your JJCPA shortfall as long as the JJCPA program is consistent with the YOBG requirements. However, please be sure that you follow the requirements as stated above regarding plan modifications.

- **Have the YOBG allocation amounts for future years been established?**

No. The formula is outlined in Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 1952 - 1956, but the Department of Finance will not calculate the final per-county amounts until the State budget is enacted each year.

- **My county is inquiring about the YOBG grant agreement, if any, for the Probation Department. Can CSA send a pdf. copy of any grant agreement or award letter notification for the YOBG?**

There is no grant agreement for YOBG; it is a direct allocation from the State Controller's Office to the counties.

- **Is there any problem with putting the money we receive for YOBG funds in a trust fund that collects interest?**

There is nothing that prohibits a county from putting its YOBG money in an interest bearing account. We are unaware of any statutory language that specifically says it is okay. Given CSA's history with similar programs, and what is in statute (such as JJCPA-related language in Government Code Sections 30061-30065), we continue to assert that counties can put YOBG funds into an interest bearing account.

- **Does any legislation or authoritative literature exist that addresses who has the right to interest relating to YOBG grant monies?**

There is nothing in the law that specifically addresses interest earned under the YOBG program; however, our response is that any interest earned on YOBG funds must be spent on programs, activities, etc. that are authorized under the YOBG program. This response is based on our experience implementing other grant programs, the laws and requirements that exist for other programs, and an opinion provided by the State Controller's Office.

➤ **Who should we contact with questions regarding YOBG?**

Feel free to contact the YOBG Program Lead, Kim Bushard, at (916) 324-0999 ([Kim.Bushard@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:Kim.Bushard@cdcr.ca.gov)) or Oscar Villegas at (916) 445-3146 ([Oscar.Villegas@cdcr.ca.gov](mailto:Oscar.Villegas@cdcr.ca.gov)) with any questions you may have.

Please check back periodically to keep apprised of the most current developments.